

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A shell for a motor vehicle, the shell being attachable to a chassis of the motor vehicle so as to, in combination therewith, define an enclosed cargo compartment wherein the shell comprises:

at least one side opening aligned generally with an exterior side surface of the vehicle; and

a outer side wall hinged above and inboard of the exterior side surface and completely covering the at least one side opening such that, in an open position, access is provided to the cargo compartment via the side opening.

2. The shell of Claim 1, wherein the shell is removably attached to the chassis.

3. The shell of Claim 1, wherein the outer side wall is at least partially transparent.

4. The shell of Claim 1, further comprising a latch securing the outer side wall in a closed position.

5. The shell of Claim 4, wherein the latch, in a locked position, locks the outer side wall in the closed position from the outside the vehicle and is operable from inside the cargo compartment to unlock the outer side wall from the closed position.

6. The shell of Claim 1, wherein the shell further comprises a moisture flange extending outwardly from the periphery of the at least one side opening wherein the moisture flange is configured to direct incident water around the at least one side opening.

7. The shell of Claim 6, further comprising a seal member attached to the moisture flange wherein, in the closed position, the seal member resiliently compresses against the outer side wall so as to seal the at least one side opening.

8. The shell of Claim 6, wherein the outer side wall overlaps the moisture flange along at least upper and opposite side portions thereof.

9. The shell of Claim 1, wherein the hinged connection of the outer side wall is covered by the outer side wall in at least a closed position.

10. The shell of Claim 1, further comprising a rear opening and an outer rear wall covering the rear opening such that, in an open position, access is provided to the cargo compartment via the rear opening.

11. The shell of Claim 10, wherein, in closed positions, the outer rear wall and outer side wall substantially abut each other.

12. The shell of Claim 11, wherein the abutment of the outer rear and side walls is positioned along a rear surface of the shell.

13. The shell of Claim 1, wherein the outer side wall comprises a generally planar surface and inwardly extending flanges at front and rear edges thereof wherein, in a closed position, the planar surface is generally parallel with the opening and the flanges extend generally perpendicular thereto.

14. A shell for a motor vehicle, the shell being attachable to a chassis of the motor vehicle so as to, in combination therewith, define an enclosed cargo compartment wherein the shell comprises:

at least one side opening;

a moisture flange extending outwardly from the periphery of the at least one side opening wherein the moisture flange is configured to direct incident water around the at least one side opening; and

a movable outer side wall covering the at least one side opening such that, in an open position, access is provided to the cargo compartment via the side opening.

15. The shell of Claim 14, wherein the shell is removably attached to the chassis.

16. The shell of Claim 14, wherein the outer side wall is at least partially transparent.

17. The shell of Claim 14, further comprising a latch securing the outer side wall in a closed position.

18. The shell of Claim 17, wherein the latch, in a locked position, locks the outer side wall in the closed position from the outside the vehicle and is operable from inside the cargo compartment to unlock the outer side wall from the closed position.

19. The shell of Claim 14, further comprising a seal member attached to the moisture flange wherein, in the closed position, the seal member resiliently compresses against the outer side wall so as to seal the at least one side opening.

20. The shell of Claim 14, wherein the outer side wall overlaps the moisture flange along at least upper and opposite side portions thereof.

21. The shell of Claim 14, wherein the outer side wall is pivotably movable.
22. The shell of Claim 14, further comprising a rear opening and an outer rear wall covering the rear opening such that, in an open position, access is provided to the cargo compartment via the rear opening.
23. The shell of Claim 22, wherein, in closed positions, the outer rear wall and outer side wall substantially abut each other.
24. The shell of Claim 23, wherein the abutment of the outer rear and side walls is positioned along a rear surface of the shell.
25. The shell of Claim 14, wherein the outer side wall comprises a generally planar surface and inwardly extending flanges at front and rear edges thereof wherein, in a closed position, the planar surface is generally parallel with the opening and the flanges extend generally perpendicular thereto.
26. A motor vehicle comprising:
 - a chassis defining a passenger compartment; and
 - a shell attached to the chassis so as to define an enclosed cargo compartment wherein the shell comprises:
 - at least one side opening aligned generally with an exterior side surface of the vehicle; and
 - a outer side wall hinged above and inboard of the exterior side surface and completely covering the at least one side opening such that, in an open position, access is provided to the cargo compartment via the side opening.
27. The motor vehicle of Claim 26, wherein the shell is removably attached to the chassis.
28. The motor vehicle of Claim 26, wherein the outer side wall is at least partially transparent.
29. The motor vehicle of Claim 26, further comprising a latch securing the outer side wall in a closed position.
30. The motor vehicle of Claim 29, wherein the latch, in a locked position, locks the outer side wall in the closed position from the outside the vehicle and is operable from inside the cargo compartment to unlock the outer side wall from the closed position.

31. The motor vehicle of Claim 26, wherein the shell further comprises a moisture flange extending outwardly from the periphery of the at least one side opening wherein the moisture flange is configured to direct incident water around the at least one side opening.

32. The motor vehicle of Claim 31, further comprising a seal member attached to the moisture flange wherein, in the closed position, the seal member resiliently compresses against the outer side wall so as to seal the at least one side opening.

33. The motor vehicle of Claim 31, wherein the outer side wall overlaps the moisture flange along at least upper and opposite side portions thereof.

34. The motor vehicle of Claim 26, wherein the hinged connection of the outer side wall is covered by the outer side wall in at least a closed position.

35. The motor vehicle of Claim 26, further comprising a rear opening and an outer rear wall covering the rear opening such that, in an open position, access is provided to the cargo compartment via the rear opening.

36. The motor vehicle of Claim 35, wherein, in closed positions, the outer rear wall and outer side wall substantially abut each other.

37. The motor vehicle of Claim 36, wherein the abutment of the outer rear and side walls is positioned along a rear surface of the shell.

38. The motor vehicle of Claim 26, wherein the outer side wall comprises a generally planar surface and inwardly extending flanges at front and rear edges thereof wherein, in a closed position, the planar surface is generally parallel with the opening and the flanges extend generally perpendicular thereto.